

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Speech Notes
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Two sentence intro about NFWF. The two important general aspects about NFWF: 1) We always leverage federal and private funds to maximize the overall contribution to conservation, and 2) We always work in partnerships with federal/state agencies, private conservation groups, or other public and private agencies.

Who we are

Congressional info:

- Created by Congress in 1984. First grants awarded in 1986.
- All federal appropriations go directly to grant making. Operating funds are privately raised.
- Foundation is a non-profit (501c3) and donations are tax deductible.

Mission

- To encourage and facilitate the on-the-ground conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants and the habitats on which they depend.
- Official foundation for USFWS and NOAA. Have a number of cooperative agreements with other federal agencies to facilitate our partnerships with them.

How we fund projects

Leverage

- Authorization requires that every dollar granted must be matched on a one to one basis by a third-party non-federal dollar. To be competitive, applicants generally need a two to one ratio (private:federal).
- Foundation and its partners raise these private matching funds. Matching funds can also be in the form of contributed goods and services.

Appropriations

- In FY2000, the Foundation received over \$20 million in federal appropriations. Agencies through which appropriations came include the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Bureau of Land Management, the Forest Service, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.
- Through cooperative agreements or other arrangements, the Foundation also received funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency among others.

How we make our decisions

Organization

- Previously, we were organized along initiatives (1. Neotropical Migratory Birds; 2. Wildlife Conservation; 3. Fisheries Management; 4. Wetlands and Private Lands Conservation; 5. Conservation Education). We recently reorganized into regions, but the types of projects we do remain the same. Each region develop its own priorities that incorporate the Foundation's overall mission and previous initiatives.
- Foundation's Board of Director's meets three times a year to determine grants. Decisions are based on staff recommendations.

Who we work with

The other important feature of NFWF is our partners.

- The Foundation has over one thousand grantees who we partner with in conservation and
- Foundation manages over 3000 grants.
- In addition to grantees, we partner with states, counties, cities, large and small private corporations, and other foundations to promote fish, wildlife, birds and the habitats upon which they depend.

Federal Agency partners

- Federal partners include, but are not limited to FWS, EPA, Bureau of Reclamation, BLM, Forest Service, NOAA, NRCS, DOD, TVA, USAID, and the National Park Service.

Newest federal partner is the Corps of Engineers.

- Memorandum of Understanding signed on March 26, 1998 with a general purpose of cooperating where our missions overlap. For example, potential areas of cooperation include endangered species protection, wetlands mitigation and restoration, floodplain protection by non-structural means, and riparian restoration projects.
- Report language in FY00 and FY 01 appropriations encourages the Corps to work with us.
- Working together, our counsel and Corps counsel determined that our federal funds cannot be used as part of local cost-share as with some other federal funds. However, we can use our private funds to support the local cost-share of a project. The challenge with private funds is to acquire these funds at the appropriate time (construction phase) for Corps' projects.

Examples of current and past cooperative efforts between the Foundation, its partners and the Corps of Engineers.

Snake River demonstration project. Completed early spring of 1999. Demonstration of larger Corps projects (feasibility is at HQ) called the Jackson Hole, WY Environmental Restoration Project. The Foundation worked with the Teton County Natural Resource District to restore riparian and in-stream habitat for cutthroat trout degraded by levee construction. The project created pools and used brush/debris fences. The fences were to decrease erosion of riparian

“islands” that slow the velocity of the river and increase habitat value for cutthroat trout. The project was successful and these techniques were incorporated into the Corps’ draft feasibility report. Project had a total cost of \$90,000 with \$40,000 provided by the Foundation and \$50,000 provided by the grantee.

LaValle Dam Removal. Removal of this dam will eliminate the last barrier to fish passage on the Baraboo River in WI. Opens up the last 100 miles for small mouth bass and walleye. Dam removal should be complete in 2000 December, as the dam has already been notched and water level lowered. Corps role has been advisory, but the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is working with the Corps to pursue a more active role. The total grant was \$225,000, with the Foundation providing \$75,000 and the grantee providing \$150,000.

Lake George Weir project. A Section 1135 project to build a small weir in Yazoo County, Mississippi to recreate 450 acres of wetlands that currently dry out annually when levels on Lake George (controlled by the Big Sunflower River) are low. Near to Yazoo National Wildlife Refuge Complex and supported by FWS. The Foundation used private funds from the Foundation’s partnership with Shell Oil (The Shell Marine Habitat Program) to support this project’s local cost share. Local sponsors are Yazoo County and Yazoo County Soil and Water Conservation District. The Foundation provided \$54,000 which is matched by \$375,000 in in-kind contributions

Royal Carribean Cruise Ltd. Settlement -

In an out of court settlement led by Justice, the Royal Carribean Cruise Ltd. paid an \$18 million criminal fine payment for discharging untreated waste into several U.S. harbors. The Foundation was not involved in this litigation, and none of its funds can be used for litigation or lobbying. Of its own accord, Justice (who pursued the case) directed \$3.5 million to the Foundation for on the ground conservation projects in the affected harbors. As an example of how the Corps could be involved in future situations is in the NY/NJ Harbor. Justice allotted \$500,000 to NY/NJ Harbor, and the Corps sat on review committee and helped generate restoration projects. The Foundation takes a small management fee from these funds.

In-lieu fee funds. This is an arrangement where we hold funds so that a wetlands permit can occur. The funds of this type are generally mitigation funds. An example of this is in the Brazoria area of TX, specifically bottomland hardwoods. Working with the Corps, FWS, TX Parks and Wildlife, the Foundation received a total of \$1.725 million to acquire 1500 acres of bottomland hardwoods. The Corps set the parameters for mitigation, and the FWS and TX Parks and Wildlife will make the acquisition decisions. The project will have a 5:1 mitigation ratio. The Foundation takes a small percentage as a management fee.

Dams and Rivers

A new program that could be a good way to partner with the Corps is the *Dams and Rivers* program. This program promotes nationally the removal of small, low-head dams or the construction of fish passages by willing dam operators. Overall, the goal of this program is to enhance biodiversity by increasing the populations and number of fish species and other aquatic wildlife, as well as birds, insects, mussels, and mammals which depend on aquatic biodiversity.

To date, the Foundation funded 46 dam removal and fish passage projects, contributing in FY2000 more than \$1 million in federal funds.

- The Foundation played a key role in an agreement reached by a diverse group of organizations to remove the 160-year old **Edwards Dam** in Maine. The Edwards Dam removal revitalized 17 miles of spawning habitat for salmon, striped bass, herring, sturgeon and other fish along the Kennebec River, thus restoring New England's longest fish spawning river. The recent agreement to remove the dam curbed years of potential litigation and involved cooperation between the Edwards Manufacturing Company, the Kennebec Hydro Developers Group, Bath Iron Works, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, the US Army Corps of Engineers, the state of Maine, and the Kennebec Coalition of environmental organizations. The Foundation serves these organizations as the organizer of quarterly stakeholder meetings and will hold and distribute funds for removal and restoration.
- The Foundation helped fund the removal of the **Quaker Neck Dam** on the Neuse River in North Carolina. This project will restore fish spawning habitat along 75 miles of the Neuse River and almost 1,000 miles of its tributaries. The restoration of the Neuse is expected to return the river to its historical role as a premier producer of striped bass and shad. A canal will provide Carolina Power and Light with the cooling water previously supplied by the dam. The Corps became involved in doing the design for an alternative way to store and pipe water. Without the Corps' expertise, Carolina Power and Light would not have agreed to the project.

Conclusion

In summary, there are a number of reasons to work with NFWF as well as a variety of ways. The Foundation brings many partners to the table as well as private funds to cooperate on Corps projects. The Foundation can also use its federal funds to help fund a demonstration of a new techniques that can be incorporated into Corps projects. NFWF partners often do not know about Corps authorities and the Foundation can help promote the environmental mission of the Corps. In the future, the Corps and the Foundation can look for other creative ways to partner on restoration projects